

the crickets away. They dug ditches around the field. They used fire. But it was all in vain.

Just as all seemed lost and starvation likely, help came from above in the form of thousands of seagulls. Eyewitness reports tell of the birds descending on the fields, gobbling up the crickets and sparing the precious crops.

Today, Utah celebrates its pioneer heritage. Many of the celebrations will center around Seagull Monument in downtown Salt Lake City, erected in honor of the event I have just described.

I encourage my colleagues to join me today in honoring the courageous spirit and the sacrifices of the Mormon pioneers.

A FOURTH INVESTIGATION OF THE INVESTIGATOR: D.C. BAR COUNSEL PROBES LEAKS BY INDEPENDENT COUNSEL STARR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. CONYERS, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, by my count, Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr is now the subject of four separate investigations into whether he and his staff improperly leaked confidential information to the media. The first is being conducted by Chief Judge Norma Holloway Johnson of the federal court in the District of Columbia. The second involves Attorney General Janet Reno's referral of the issue to the Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility. The third is being conducted by Mr. Starr himself in response to complaints lodged by the President's lawyers. And the fourth, as reported in the media today, is in the hands of the District of Columbia Bar Counsel.

Back in early February, the President's lawyer, Mr. Kendall, wrote the Independent Counsel that the "leaking by your office has reached an intolerable point." In response to that letter, the Independent Counsel struck an indignant tone. He called the letter from the President's lawyer "strange and inappropriate," and accused Mr. Kendall of elevating "mere suspicion to specific accusation without any facts other than the press's often-misleading attributions of sources."

The Independent Counsel's response to Mr. Kendall added that: "[i]n light of the unclear press attributions in some examples cited in your letter, I have undertaken an investigation to determine whether, despite my persistent admonitions, someone in this Office may be culpable. I have no factual basis—as you likewise do not have—even to suspect anyone at this juncture. I am undertaking this investigation with deep regret, because I know how demoralizing it is to a staff of highly professional and experienced federal prosecutors. You do an extreme disservice to these men and women—and to the legal profession and the public—by your unsupported charges."

Mr. Starr has never reported the results of his "investigation." But in light of his later admissions that he and his deputy, Mr. Bennett, routinely talk to the press on an off-the-record basis, I assume he did not have to look far to find the source of these leaks. Judge Johnson,

the Attorney General, and now the District of Columbia Bar Counsel, have all treated this issue far more seriously than the Independent Counsel. In fact, media reports say that Judge Johnson has ordered Mr. Starr to show cause why he should not be held in contempt for his inappropriate release of information.

The Independent Counsel's indifference to this issue is very troubling. To date, Mr. Starr has defended his actions with the technical claim that rules regarding grand jury secrecy apply only after information is presented to a grand jury. I do not agree with that claim, and I do not believe that D.C. Circuit law allows the kind of off-the-record conversations that happened here. We will see whether Mr. Starr can survive the scrutiny of these outside investigators.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

EXPANSION OF MEDICAL AND PATIENT RIGHTS FOR ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, with all of the pandemonium that transpired just a few short minutes ago, I imagine that some of my colleagues might have gathered from the discourse that many of us do not come to the floor of the House with passion and concern and personal stories. And, so, I thought it was extremely important that we cleared the dust and put a face on the debate that we had today.

Sadly, we lost that debate, those of us who care about the expansion of medical rights and patient rights for all Americans. This morning as I rose, I was determined not to share my personal story, for the people send us to this Congress to stand and to represent their interests, but I do think it is important for the people to realize that we are human, too.

I have had a personal story and personal loss. For, recognizing that all of us care about our loved ones, I experienced the denial of service in the care of my father. So this is not a frivolous and baseless debate for me, but I thought it was more important to share with my colleagues the story of the Chiang family.

This young couple, with a husband and wife, left a position and the father was the sole breadwinner, and the mother was determined to keep a certain HMO so that her son could continue to go to that same pediatrician. They kept that HMO, and the son had the pediatrician, but the mother became ill.

She had constant pain in her stomach. She went to the HMO doctor, and

continuously he said, "We will put you on a certain diet." But the pain became so debilitating she went back again because she thought it was something that had to do with her ability to give birth again.

She went back and further service was denied, until finally, some three months later, she was sent to a specialist and it was then determined that that mother, 34 years old, had colon cancer. And subsequent to that late determination, after the denial of service, that 34-year-old died.

Today I read to my colleagues a letter from Lula Somers, a senior citizen who has been in the medical profession for many, many years from Pasadena, Texas, the community that I come from. She said, "This letter is directed to you from a working senior citizen who has served a lifetime in the medical profession and who is deeply concerned about the direction we are heading. Dedicated healing physicians are having their once regarded highest standard of ethics and devotion be dictated to by people who have not the first clue of the onerous problem being cast upon innocent citizens."

She said she worked at a time when doctors saved a gravely ill child, sutured bleeding patients, sat at the bedside of someone dying, and maybe wound up with vegetables or eggs from someone's farm.

We may not be able to go to that, my colleagues, but the Patients' Bill of Rights the Democrats and bipartisan Republicans were supporting realizes that we must stand with the physicians and the providers of health care like nurses and nurses assistants and the patients.

The bill we pass today will hurt my State of Texas. It will probably hurt my colleagues'. Texas already has provisions for well-child care, mammography screening, minimum maternity care, breast reconstruction, diabetes supplies, alcohol abuse treatment, drug abuse treatment. The bill we pass today will overcome all of that, supercede that. Mental health care and bone mass measurement. All of that Texas had. Now with this Federal bill that the Republicans will pass, we do not have it.

Just think for a moment if they have a heart attack and go straight to the nearest hospital but the hospital does not participate in their plan. The Republican bill will allow their plan to force them right out of the hospital. That is what we passed today.

If their plan denied them an X-ray for a broken arm because the plan did not think the X-rays were medically necessary, they could not appeal on the basis of merit. They can only appeal on the basis of what the plan says is a necessary medical condition. It takes away that decision of the physician and their pain and the need for service and puts it in the hands of some accountant in an office far, far away.

If they are a woman and they want direct access to their nurse midwife,